

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 October 2013
1.35 - 4.18 pm

Present: Councillors Kerr (Chair), Blackhurst (Vice-Chair), Johnson, Kightley, Moghadas, Price, Roberts and Tucker.

Executive Councillor for Housing: Councillor Smart

Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing: Councillor Brown

Tenant and Leaseholders Representatives: Diane Best, Kay Harris and Diana Minns

Officers Present:

Director of Customer and Community Services: Liz Bisset

Head of Arts and Recreation: Debbie Kaye

Head of Community Development: Trevor Woollams

Head of Strategic Housing: Alan Carter

Urban Growth Project Manager: Tim Wetherfield

Business Manager/Principal Accountant: Julia Hovells

Development Officer: Sabrina Walthamstow

Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

13/63/CS Apologies

There were no apologies.

13/64/CS Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

13/65/CS Minutes

Minutes of the meetings of the 23rd May 2013 and the 25th June 2013 were approved and signed as correct records.

Request to Film Meeting

The Chair gave permission for a member of the public to film the meeting. It was confirmed that the filming would take place from a fixed position and cease if members of the public or speakers expressed a desire not to be filmed. Members of the public were given an opportunity to state if they did not want to be filmed.

13/66/CS Public Questions

Public Speakers

Mr Johnson

Mr Johnson regarding the facilities at Parkside Pool raised the following points:

- i. Kelsey Kerridge is 50 yards from Parkside Pool.
- ii. Kelsey Kerridge is a charity and received funding from the City Council.
- iii. The Management Board is not remunerated.
- iv. Existing facilities at Kelsey Kerridge and Parkside Pool are complimentary.
- v. A fitness centre at the Pool would introduce competition.
- vi. What are the cost implications?
- vii. The Pool would have an unfair advantage as it has a ground level entrance.
- viii. The money could be better spent improving facilities at the other pools across Cambridge.

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing stated that the facilities at Parkside Pool were being expanded and would not be in competition with Kelsey Kerridge. As discussed at the last Community Services meeting, the new facilities would be targeting a different customer base. The good relationship with Kelsey Kerridge was valued.

Mr Johnson replied and stated that he considered this a poor business decision.

Mr Naptone

Mr Naptone regarding the facilities at Parkside Pool raised the following points:

- i. The loss of the health suite was upsetting.
- ii. It was the best in Cambridge and compliments the pool.
- iii. If it was underused, this was due to lack of promotion and poor management.
- iv. Disputed the usage figures and the way they were gathered and suggested the facility was well used.

- v. The facility should be treasured.

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing stated that the facility had been opened in the late 1990s and that other facilities were now available. Figures collected over a number of years showed a steady decline in usage. The facility needed renovations and may be replaced elsewhere. A public meeting was planned to discuss the options.

Mr Naptone reiterated that in his opinion the facilities at the pool were good and that there was evidence to support the assertion that the user count was inaccurate.

Raphael Silberzahn

Raphael Silberzahn regarding facilities at Parkside Pool raised the following points:

- i. As a frequent user of the facility the underuse appears to be linked to poor management.
- ii. SLM had a conflict of interest in that the health suite was not a facility that made them money, as opposed to income generating swimming lessons, and therefore they did not promote it.
- iii. It was the duty of the Council to provide facilities for people unable to afford commercial options.
- iv. Usage could be increased by providing vouchers for those on a low income.
- v. The City is well supplied with gyms.

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing stated the proposed gym would be one of a kind. It would be targeted at disabled residents and GP referrals. The existing health suite was old and underused. The Council had a duty to provide facilities to the widest public use. More facilities may be offered and this would be discussed at the public meeting.

Raphael Silberzahn stated that members do not check in when using the facilities which results in inaccurate recording of usage.

Dr Dmitri Guskov

Dr Guskov addressed the Committee regarding the minutes of the previous meeting and agenda item 8 (minute number 13/70/CS below) and made the following points:

- i. Officers had not responded to points raised at the last Community Services Scrutiny Committee meeting.

- ii. Proposals available would not ensure leaseholders would not be worse off.
- iii. Shared ownership would result in them being worse off.
- iv. He was being treated less favourably than a tenant and would not be entitled to expenses.
- v. The new deal would not allow leaseholders to be fully compensated.
- vi. Officers had failed to correct an error in the policy.
- vii. New build properties would lose value faster than older properties.

The Executive Councillor for Housing responded. She confirmed that shared equity and shared ownership was not the same thing. Leaseholders were being offered the best financial deal possible. She confirmed that the Council wished to find a solution that was agreeable to all parties.

The Head of Strategic Housing confirmed that shared ownership, although a higher cost, was offered as a choice of alternative housing for leaseholders to consider. Shared equity had been developed as a solution to put leaseholders in a position that was no worse than their existing situation.

Dr Guskov was concerned that the committee would not debate this decision.

Councillor Reiner

Councillor Reiner addressed the Committee regarding agenda item 11 (minute number 13/73/CS below). For the ease of the reader, her comments can be found at the beginning of the relevant item.

13/67/CS Decisions Taken by Executive Councillors

5a Community Development Grant Application

The decision was noted.

5b Winter Comfort Contract

The decision was noted.

5c Appointment to Outside Body

The decision was noted.

5d Repurchase of Shared Ownership Property

The decision was noted.

13/68/CS Council New Build Programme - Scheme Approvals

Matter for Decision:

The report provided details of the proposed redevelopment of the final three sites that, together, will complete the investment of the £2.6 million capital grant from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) by the end of March 2015 to provide 146 new Affordable Housing dwellings (the 146 Programme). The three sites were all garage sites. A fourth site had been included in the report that involved the potential redevelopment of a disused drying area. The proposal for the fourth site is related to the Council's development of land at Clay Farm and involves the provision of two new houses to at least Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes as prototypes for the Clay Farm development.

The report highlighted that in addition to the use of the HCA grant there was the opportunity to invest capital receipts from the Right to Buy (RTB) programme.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:

The Executive Councillor resolved, for each of the following:

- a. 301 to 326 Hawkins Road Garages.
- b. 11 to 45 Ekins Road Garages
- c. Fulbourn Road Garages
- d. Disused Drying Area at Anstey Way

to:

- i. Approve the continuation of site feasibility work, noting the indicative schemes and the tenure mix options.
- ii. Approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Director of Resources (or any equivalent successor post), Executive Councillor for Housing, Chair and Spokes to agree a final scheme and budget for each site based on the tenure mix that optimises the use of HCA and RTB receipts for the HRA Business Plan.
- iii. Approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Director of Resources (or any equivalent successor post) and the Head of Legal Services to seal a Development Agreement with the Council's preferred house-builder/developer partners.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Head of Strategic Housing regarding the Council New Build Programme. He highlighted the inclusion potential grant from the Homes and Communities Agency and Right to Buy receipts in the decision and the need for flexibility. Members noted the following correction to the recommendations where appropriate : that consultation should be with the Director of Resources (or any equivalent successor post)

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report.

- i. The possibility of delivering the plan with a higher than expected proportion of Council Housing was welcomed.
- ii. The Committee welcomed the savings to be achieved by allowing two properties to be built as prototypes for the Clay Farm development.
- iii. The plans in place to work with future residents on how to get the best results from the Code 5 features of their homes were welcomed.
- iv. Members were assured that the properties would be allocated using the standard Homelink process. However, potential residents, both owner occupiers and tenants, would be made aware that their utility bills would be monitored for an initial period.
- v. Members were concerned that internal storage would be sacrificed in order to accommodate code 5 technology. Officers stated that the design features of the house used passive measures to achieve energy savings rather than technology.
- vi. Members questioned the demand for one bedroom properties and how future demand was assessed. A member briefing on future housing needs was suggested.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the amended recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

13/69/CS Housing Revenue Account Mid-Year Financial Review

Matter for Decision

The Housing Revenue Account Budget Setting Report, considered and approved in January / February of each year is the long-term strategic planning document for housing landlord services provided by Cambridge City Council.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Mid-Year Financial Review provides an opportunity to review the assumptions incorporated as part of the longer-term financial planning process, recommending any changes in response to new legislative requirements, variations in external economic factors and amendments to service delivery methods, allowing incorporation into budgets and financial forecasts at the earliest opportunity.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

- i. Note the proposals for changes in housing capital budgets, as detailed in Sections 6 and 7, and summarised in Appendix F of the Officer's report and to recommend the proposals for decision at Council on 24th October 2013.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Business Manager and Principal Accountant regarding the Housing Revenue Account Mid-Year Financial Review.

Members expressed concern that reductions to the disabled adaptations budget could result in a shortfall at the end of the financial period. Officers stated that the remaining budget was expected to meet demand.

In response to questions from Committee members the Business Manager and Principal Accountant clarified how the inflation predictions had been calculated (Consumer Price Index plus 2%). She suggested that making adjustments at this point in the year was part of good budget management.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Scrutiny Committee resolved not to exclude members of the public from the meeting as pre scrutiny of the report had not been requested and there would be no debate of the item.

13/70/CS Compulsory Purchase Order (Confidential)

Matter for Decision:

The report requested permission to proceed with a Compulsory purchase Order under section 17 of the Housing Act 1985. Details of the property in question were included in the confidential report.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Housing:

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

- i. Approve the Compulsory Purchase Order.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

There was no debate on this item as pre-scrutiny had not been requested.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

13/71/CS Cambridge Folk Festival Portable Cabins production tender 2014 - 2016**Matter for Decision:**

The contract for the provision of Portable Cabins for the Cambridge Folk Festival expired after the 2013 event. Officers were seeking permission to enter a formal tender process for the provision of this service for the Cambridge Folk Festival from 2014 for up to a maximum of 3 years.

The contract would be awarded to the successful contractor on a single year basis with an option to extend the contract annually subject to satisfactory performance of the contractor and no anticipated changes to requirements. The anticipated contract financial value is £35,000 pa (£105,000 total for a 3 year term).

Price includes a 10% flexibility in case of changes to specification.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

- i. Authorise the Head of Arts & Recreation to tender for a contractor to provide Portable Cabin services for the Folk Festival.
- ii. Authorise the Head of Arts and Recreation to award the contract to the most favourable tender, in accordance with pre-determined selection criteria.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

There was no debate of this item as pre-scrutiny had not been requested. The Committee noted that the decision was Non Key rather than Key as stated in the Officer's report.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

13/72/CS Future Options of Discretionary Services

Matter for Decision:

The mid-year financial review, presented to Strategy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 30 September 2013 set out the challenges facing Cambridge City Council as an organisation. It anticipated that the City Council will need to transform the way that it delivers services, reflecting on the sorts of options the Council would need to consider in order to achieve this with diminishing resources. The report considered future options for Arts and Recreation and Community Development, discretionary services which together account for around a quarter of the Council's net budget.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

- i. Agree that a range of options would be brought forward for transforming the delivery of Arts and Recreation and Community Development in the longer term.
- ii. Building on the principles in the review of Children and Young People's Participation Service (ChYpPS), as reported to this committee in January 2012, ask the Head of Community Development to restructure the service to deliver savings of £340k for 2014.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Director of Customer and Community Services regarding the Future Options for Discretionary Services.

At the request of Councillor Moghadas, it was agreed that the two recommendations detailed in the report be considered and voted on separately.

Councillor Moghadas stated that the recent review of the ChYpPS service had demonstrated the unique nature of the service and how other authorities did not do anything comparable. However, she argued that rather than evidence to support a cut to the service, this should be celebrated and valued. She argued that while Cambridge in general was an affluent area, there were pockets of deprivation and a 50% cut to universal play provision would be a hard hit for families.

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing expressed disappointment that Labour Councillors were considering voting against the recommendation. She stated that the report was not proposing a simplistic approach but rather was looking at new ways to deliver the service.

Councillor Roberts argued that the report lacked data on how the money would be saved, the level of redundancies and the impact on services ward by ward.

Concerns were expressed regarding the following issues:

- i. Voluntary agencies would be expected to pick up the shortfall in services
- ii. The loss of the diversionary nature of the ChYpPS service would result in increased anti-social behaviour and associated costs.
- iii. Had other services, such as those used extensively by non-city residents, for example the Junction, been considered as an alternative saving?
- iv. The options in the report were limited and lacked detail.
- v. The ChYpPS bus and boat offered unique play experiences for young people and could also be income generating with the correct commercial management.

The Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing responded and stated that the ChYpPS team was valued and that the report was not a reflection on the services provided. The report seeks to protect the core values of the service while recognising the current financial realities. The holistic approach was designed to maintain the good work achieved to-date. The alternative would be to just stop doing things.

The Head of Community Development outlined the timeframes for delivering the savings and consulting staff. He confirmed the income generating targets of the ChYpPS Adventure service and stated that this service had the potential to grow and expand. The potential for delivering training to other providers was also being explored.

The Director of Customer and Community Services outlined the benefits of bringing together the Arts and Recreation Service and the Community Development Service in the longer term. This would allow alternative business structures to be explored and would facilitate the sharing of skills and experience.

Councillor Kerr, in her role as Young People's Champion, stated that the ChYpPS service was highly valued and that steps would be taken to protect its core values, particularly for vulnerable young people. However, hard financial decision needed to be taken. Alternative sources of funding were not available and officers had worked hard to explore all possible option.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse recommendation 2.1.

To agree that a range of options would be brought forward for transforming the delivery of Arts and Recreation and Community Development in the longer term.

The Committee resolved by 4 votes to 4 (on the Chair's casting vote) to endorse recommendation 2.2.

Building on the principles in the review of Children and Young People's Participation Service (ChYpPS), as reported to this committee in January 2012, to ask the Head of Community Development to restructure the service to deliver savings of £340k for 2014.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

13/73/CS 13/63/CS Developer Contributions: second priority-setting roundCouncillor Reiner

Councillor Reiner addressed the Committee in support of the development of Rouse Ball Pavilion on Jesus Green and made the following comments:

- i. The current pavilion was named after Walter William Rouse Ball, known as W. W. Rouse Ball, who was a fellow at Trinity College in the 19th century.
- ii. The Master and Bursar of Trinity are aware that the City Council are considering refurbishing or rebuilding the pavilion and had been invited to make contact so that we could explore ways to renew the links between the pavilion, the City and Trinity College.
- iii. She requested that the committee considers this favourably and be aware that residents had been campaigning for this for a number of years and had strong feelings for this project.

Matter for Decision:

Developer contributions are payments received by the council from property owners/developers to help address the impact of greater demand for facilities arising from development. The council has a devolved decision-making process. Alongside this, half the payments from major developments determined by the Planning Committee go into a city-wide fund for strategic projects in Cambridge to create or improve facilities that would benefit residents more widely. The second priority-setting round is now under way, planning ahead for the next set of projects to be taken forward once first round and on-going projects are completed. The report considered the refreshed list of strategic project ideas for the use of community facilities, and outdoor and indoor sports facilities contributions.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:

The Executive Councillor resolved to:

- i. Allocate an additional £40k (community facilities) & £25k (outdoor sports/formal open space) to the existing strategic priority project for the Rouse Ball Pavilion development (to which £185k has already been allocated);
- ii. Prioritise a £25k outdoor sports grant for improved cricket net provision at Netherhall School, so that this can be taken forward now;

- iii. Defer the second round short-listing of other project ideas for the use of sports facilities contributions in the city-wide fund until the Cambridge Sports Strategy for 2014-17 has been developed; and
- iv. Noted the consultation feedback on other strategic project ideas relating to the Community Well-being portfolio.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Urban Growth Project Manager regarding the second round of developer contributions priority-setting.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the Officer for the amount of detailed work that had gone in to the programme.

Members expressed surprise that a commercial concern, such as the Arts Theatre was being considered for S106 funding. It was explained that the list of project ideas reflected the ideas that had been put forward by area committees, local residents, groups and organisations and that a commitment had been given to report a summary of all the feedback received.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

13/74/CS Community Facility Capital Grants Programmes in East Area and Newtown**Matter for Decision:**

The report followed on from a report to Environment Scrutiny Committee in June 2013 on developer contributions and devolved decision-making. The report highlighted capital programmes for improving community facilities across the east area wards and the Newtown area within Trumpington. The

report questioned whether the programmes should now be assimilated into the single corporate devolved process to simplify management arrangements and ensure fairness across the city.

The report recommended that the remaining unallocated funds should be incorporated into the Council's approach to devolved decision making.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wellbeing:

The Executive Councillor resolved that:

- i. The remaining unallocated budget within the East Area Capital Grants Programme be incorporated into the Council's approach to devolved decision making.
- ii. The remaining unallocated budget within the Newtown Capital Grants Programme be incorporated into the Council's approach to devolved decision making.

Reason for the Decision:

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations:

The Committee received a report from the Head of Community Development regarding the Community Facility Capital Grants Programmes in East Area and Newtown.

The Committee asked for clarity on the decision process.

The Committee resolved unanimously to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of interest declared by the Executive Councillor (and any dispensations granted)

Not applicable.

The meeting ended at 4.18 pm

CHAIR